What is claimed is:

1. A method for changing the section of a billet of a continuous casting plant during continuous casting, wherein opposed sides of the billet are in contact with oppositely positioned roll supports arranged below a continuous casting die, wherein the roll supports are comprised of segments having rolls, wherein adjoining ones of the segments of each roll support are connected to one another by a jointed connection and wherein each segment is configured to be adjustable independent of the other segments with respect to an angular position relative to the billet, and wherein in an initial position of the segments of the roll supports are adjusted to a uniform billet section; the method comprising the step of:

advancing sequentially in a direction of continuous casting the segments toward the billet by moving the jointed connections toward the billet in a controlled sequence of adjusting steps for reducing the section of the billet; or

moving sequentially in a direction of continuous casting the segments away from the billet by moving the jointed connections away from the billet in a controlled sequence of adjusting steps for increasing the section of the billet.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein, for reducing the section of the billet with a constant casting speed and with the solidification point of the billet having passed the first and second segments, an exit side of the first segment and an inlet side of the second segment in the casting direction are advanced in a first one of the adjusting steps toward the billet by moving the first and second segments at the jointed connection connecting the first and second segments toward the billet by set-point control, and after the first and second segments have reached a target position, an exit side of the second segment and an inlet side of the third segment in the casting direction are advanced in a second one of the adjusting steps toward the billet by moving the second and third segments at the jointed connection connecting the second and third segments toward the billet, and after the second and third segments have reached a target position, in further ones of the adjusting steps the third and further segments are advanced toward the billet sequentially in the same manner until all segments have reached the target position.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein, for increasing the section of the billet with a constant casting speed and with the solidification point of the billet having

passed the first and second segments, the exit side of the first segment and the inlet side of the second segment in the casting direction are moved away from the billet in a first one of the adjusting steps by moving the first and second segments at the jointed connection connecting the first and second segments away from the billet by set-point control, and, after the first and second segments have reached a target position, the exit side of the second segment and the inlet side of the third segment in the casting direction are moved away from the billet in a second one of the adjusting steps by moving the second and third segments at the jointed connection connecting the second and third segments away from the billet, and, after the second and third segments have reached a target position, in further ones of the adjusting steps the third and further segments and so forth are moved away from the billet sequentially in the same manner until all segments have reached the target position.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the segments are adjusted at a constant adjusting speed with dynamic position control, wherein a predetermined force threshold value is not surpassed.

5. The method according to claim 1, further

comprising the step of calculating an adjusting speed of the segments for advancing or moving away the segments based on permissible billet elongation limit, the current casting speed, the current section adjustment, and the resulting volume flow of the billet.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein the adjusting speed is calculated, based on the current casting speed, the segment length, and the required adjusting stroke of the segments, by the equation

$$V = Ds/Ls * Vcast$$

wherein Ds is the section change, Ls is the segment length, and Vcast is the current casting speed.

7. The method according to claim 1, wherein the adjusting steps are carried out by hydraulic adjusting devices, further comprising the step of monitoring the adjusting steps via current cylinder pressure of the hydraulic adjusting devices, wherein, when a predetermined force threshold value is surpassed, force control is applied instead of position control and wherein, when the target position has been reached, the position control is applied again.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein, because

of the jointed connections, the adjusting speed of an exit side of one of the segments and the adjusting speed of an inlet side of an adjoining one of the segments in the casting direction are synchronous.

9. The method according to claim 1, wherein the adjusting steps are hydraulically controlled and wherein the adjusting steps begin at an exit side of the first segment in the casting direction and are sequentially continued simultaneously at an inlet side and an exit side of the sequential segments.

10. A device for performing the method according to claim 1, the device comprising:

a first roll support and a second roll support positioned opposite one another and configured to receive a billet therebetween;

the first and second roll supports comprised of segments having rolls, wherein adjoining ones of the segments of each roll support are connected to one another by a jointed connection and wherein each one of the segments is configured to be adjustable independent of the other segments with respect to an angular position relative to the billet;

an adjusting device configured to move the

segments of the first and second roll supports, wherein the adjusting devices comprises means for position control or force control.

11. The device according to claim 10, wherein the adjusting device comprises controlled, direction-reversing hydraulic cylinders configured to act on the segments in the area of the jointed connections, wherein the first segment has an inlet side and an exit side and has only one of the hydraulic cylinders correlated therewith in the area of the exit side.